REMARKS

Claims 1-22 were pending. Claim 1 is amended, and new claims 23-30 are presented. No new matter is entered.

Claim Rejections: 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 2, 8, 9, 17-19, 21, and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as encompassing subject matter anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 5,902,340 to White et al. The Examiner took the position that White's tapered portions 411-412 meet the recited spigot and locking band.

Applicants ask the Examiner to reconsider this position because White's tapered portion 411 lacks the constant cross-sectional geometry along its length required by claim 1 as amended herein. A "constant cross-sectional geometry" is one that is unchanging. But White's tapered portion 411 does not have a constant cross-sectional geometry; instead, it tapers along its length. (Although Fig. 4 might be thought to show element 412 as cylindrical, White's specification at col. 11, lines 18-24 clearly states that element 412 tapers and mates with tapered bore 431.) A truncated cone such as one of White's tapers cannot be said to have a constant cross-sectional geometry along its length because its diameter changes (i.e., is not constant) along its length.

And White certainly does not disclose the requirement of claim 2 that the locking band and the receiving portion be substantially cylindrical.

Claims 1-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as encompassing subject matter anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,706,072 to Dwyer et al. The Examiner identified Dwyer's parts 30 and 32 as meeting the recited locking band.

Applicants ask the Examiner to reconsider this position for reasons analogous to those given above with respect to White. Dwyer expressly describes both parts as being tapered (col. 7, lines

18-26: "tapered portion 32;" "shoulder mounting portion 30 . . . possess[es] a taper"). But claim 1, as amended, requires that the locking band have a constant cross-sectional geometry along its length. As discussed above, a tapered object does not have a constant cross-sectional geometry along its length.

Claim Rejections: 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as encompassing subject matter unpatentable over White or Dwyer in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,507,830 to DeMane et al.

Claims 11-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as encompassing subject matter unpatentable over White or Dwyer in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,299,648 to Doubler et al.

Applicants ask the Examiner to reconsider the rejections because neither DeMane nor Doubler provides the teachings that White or Dwyer lacks with regard to amended claim 1. Specifically, neither DeMane nor Doubler describes a spigot having a locking band with a constant cross-sectional geometry along its length. So even if either reference is combined with White or Dwyer, the combination still lacks all limitations required by claim 1.

All other claims depend ultimately from claim 1 and so are allowable for the reasons given above.

Consequently, Applicants ask the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw all rejections.

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Respectfully submitted,

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